

# Brethren Evangelist

"I Am the Way, the Truth and the Life."—Jesus

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## Editorial

### Rev. J. M. Bowman

Rev. J. M. Bowman was born October 17, 1863, near Roann, Indiana, and died at San Diego, California, January 19, 1902, bringing his age to 38 years, three months and two days. May 15, 1900, he was married to Miss Etta Warvel, sister of Mrs. W. C. Perry, now of Milledgeville, Ill. His wife, aged father and four brothers survive him. His mother, a brother and an only sister preceded him to the rest whither he too has gone.

Tho still a young man at the time of his death he had already given nearly twenty years of his life to the service of the Lord. It was in the year 1883, while attending school at Mt. Morris, Illinois, that he was impressed with the importance of giving his life to the service of the Master, and united with the German Baptist church. Returning to his home at Roann, Indiana, he taught school for a period of five or six years. A little later he identified himself with the Brethren church of Roann, and in the denomination of which this local church is a part he continued his membership until the time of his death. A year after the transfer of his membership to the Brethren church he was called to the office of deacon for the duties and responsibilities of which he gave evidence of special fitness. Shortly after he was called, by the congregation where he held his membership, to the ministry and advanced to the Eldership.

By unanimous vote of the members of this congregation he was called to serve them as pastor. He accepted the call and for two years did them faithful service. During this time the church in which the Roann people now worship was erected, a work in the accomplishment of which he was chiefly instrumental. In 1892 he was elected State evangelist by the Indiana conference. The year following he received a call from the Glenford, Ohio, congregation, which he accepted, and as pastor faithfully served this people for a period of almost seven years. Under his ministration the congregation grew both in numbers and in spiritual strength, mission points were opened, and at one of these places a congregation organized and a new church built. He was twice elected State evangelist by the Conference of Ohio, and also served the Buckeye City, Ohio, church for a short time, as a supply we think. In the fall of 1899 he took charge of the Miamisburg congregation and very acceptably served these people until failing health compelled him to resign the work in 1900. His physician advised him to cease active work in the ministry and try the mountains of Colorado whose invigorating climate, if anything, might

have the power to arrest the progress of that almost invariably fatal disease, consumption, which had taken a firm hold upon our brother. He made a glorious fight for life, going from one place to another and at last to lower California, but neither nature nor nature's assistants seemed to have power to restore the lost vitality, gradually the disease tightened its grip until on the nineteenth day of January 1902 death claimed its victim.

Brother Bowman was a man of intensely strong convictions. What he believed he believed with all the strength of his heart and mind, and spared neither time nor effort in the accomplishment of what he recognized clearly as his mission and work in the world. His strong convictions were but the resultant of an equally strong faith in God. Under the most trying circumstances his faith and trust in Christ never failed him; the promises of the Word were most precious to him, and of the fulfillment of these promises he had no more doubt than he had that two and two make four. The promise that "all things work together for good to them that love the Lord" was as real to him as any fact in the material universe, and no less certain of fulfillment in every case.

In the most critical moments of his life he wrote letters on the triumphs and the final victory of the Christ life in the soul which had in them the ring of a paean. Of the final triumphs of the kingdom of God he never had any doubt. The simplicity and childlikeness of his faith gave him that sweet and perfect peace which no external elements or environments could disturb. The cause of the Master lay very close to his heart, and to its advancement he had dedicated his life.

He was an exceptionally close Bible student. Few ministers in the Brethren church were better acquainted with their Bible than was Brother Bowman. Others have studied the Bible more critically, but very few more devotionally. It was his daily food; he lived and moved and had his being in the atmosphere of the blessed truths of the Word. The epistles of Paul were his favorites, and among these Ephesians and Philippians. An examination of his Bible will show the marks of a careful student, and if any portion of it shows more wear than another, it is likely to be these epistles. His last contribution to the EVANGELIST, received at this office a few days after the notice of his death reached Roann, and which we have been informed was written but a few hours before his death, is a precious truth gathered from one of these epistles, a theme surely most appropriate for contemplation in the closing hours of one's life, "In Christ Complete." That was the victory for which he fought, and the victory which finally crowned the closing scenes of a beautiful life. "In Christ Complete," happy